

Message Text

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SUBJECT: ABVA COUNCIL WARNS COMMUNIST ACTIVISTS

1. SUMMARY

NVV/FNV-AFFILIATED CIVIL SERVANTS UNION (ABVA) WARNS
COMMUNIST MEMBERS AGAINST ABUSIVE TACTICS AT BRANCH
LEVEL. END SUMMARY.

2. THE COUNCIL OF THE NETHERLANDS' STRONGEST UNION OF
CIVIL SERVANTS, THE 190,000 STRONG NVV/FNV-AFFILIATED
ABVA, ON APRIL 10 DECLINED TO VOTE ITS EXECUTIVE
SPECIFIC POWERS TO EXPEL UNION MEMBERS PLAYING PARTY
POLITICS AT BRANCH MEETINGS. THE EXECUTIVE BROUGHT TO THE
COUNCIL A COMPLAINT THAT SOME 8000 COMMUNIST PARTY
MEMBERS AND SYMPATHIZERS, USING TIME-HONORED TACTICS
SUCH AS CHECKING AND BLOC ACTION, WERE SUBORDINATING
UNION INTERESTS TO PARTY OBJECTIVES IN THE ANTWERP,
ROTTERDAM, DELFT AND LEIDEN BRANCHES. ALTHOUGH THE
EXECUTIVE PROPOSED A MOTION LOOKING TO THE EXPULSION
OF COMMUNIST ACTIVISTS, IT FINALLY WITHDREW THE MOTION
IN FAVOR OF A WEAKER ONE EMPOWERING THE EXECUTIVE TO USE
ALL THE MEANS AT ITS DISPOSAL TO DEAL WITH THE SITUATION.

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3. THE ALTERNATIVE MOTION WAS PRESENTED FOLLOWING A
DISCUSSION DURING WHICH SOME COUNCIL MEMBERS ACCUSED
THE EXECUTIVE OF PROCEEDING WITH INSUFFICIENT EVIDENCE
TO A "WITCH-HUNT" OF CPN MEMBERS. THE EXECUTIVE
RETORTED THAT NO DISSEMINATION AGAINST COMMUNISTS
WAS INTENDED, THAT COMMUNISTS WERE WELCOME AS ABVA
MEMBERS SO LONG AS THEY REFRAINED FROM PLAYING PARTY

POLITICS AT UNION MEETINGS, AND THAT THE EXECUTIVE WOULD
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PROCEED IN THE SAME WAY AGAINST ABUSIVE TACTICS WHATEVER
THE POLITICAL AFFILIATION OF THE MEMBERS INVOLVED.

4. ABVA DEPUTY CHAIRMAN VAN DER SCHUER, COMMENTING ON
THE ALTERNATIVE MOTION, TOLD NEWSMEN THAT THE UNION'S
CONSTITUTION ALREADY ALLOWS THE EXECUTIVE TO TAKE
PROTECTIVE ACTION; THAT THE MOTION - ADOPTED BY 180 TO
20 - WAS IN THE NATURE OF A WARNING. THERE WOULD BE NO
COMMUNIST WITHHOLD. COMMUNIST MEMBERS COULD REMAIN
IN THE UNION SO LONG AS THEY DID NOT ACT AGAINST ABVA
INTERESTS. IT WAS FOR THE EXECUTIVE TO INTERPRET AND
APPLY THIS GUIDELINE. THE EXECUTIVE HAS THE AUTHORITY
TO EXPEL, BUT EXPELLED MEMBERS HAVE THE RIGHT OF
APPEAL TO THE COUNCIL, SAID VAN DER SCHEUR.

5. COMMENT
THIS TYPE OF COMMUNIST ACTIVITY AT THE BRANCH LEVEL
REPORTEDLY HAS BEEN A CONTINUING NUISANCE, NOT ONLY
IN THE ABVA, BUT ALSO IN THE NVV'S INDUSTRIAL BOND.
THE ABVA COUNCIL'S RESPONSE DOES NOT APPEAR TO STEM
FROM ANY "SOFTNESS" ON THE QUESTION, RATHER FROM CONCERN
THAT STRONGER MEASURES WHICH AT THIS STAGE MAY BE
UNNECESSARY - MIGHT CREATE FURTHER DISSENSION
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IN THE UNION. AN IDENTICAL WARNING LAST YEAR BY THE NVV
INDUSTRIAL BOND TO ITS OFFENDING MEMBERS WAS SUFFICIENT
TO DEAL WITH A SIMILAR ABUSE IN THAT UNION. INK-AND-
FILE INDIFFERENCE SEEMS TO BE THE REAL PROBLEM.
ABVA VICE-CHAIRMAN VAN DER SCHEUR SAID THAT ATTENDANCE
AT UNION MEETINGS AVERAGES NO MORE THAN 50% OF TOTAL
MEMBERSHIP - THE EXCEPTION OF COURSE BEING THE
COMMUNISTS, WHO ARE NOT ONLY ACTIVE BUT EXCEPTIONALLY
WELL-ORGANIZED.

6. VAN DER SCHEUR'S REMARK (REPORTED IN THE PRESS)
CONCERNING EVEN-HANDED JUSTICE FOR ALL WHO PLAY PARTY
POLITICS AT UNION MEETINGS MAY HAVE HURT THE EAR OF
NVV INDUSTRIAL BOND PRESIDENT ARIE GROENEVELT WHOSE
PROPOSED FEDERATION WITH HIS NKV COUNTERPART COLLAPSED
EARLIER THIS YEAR OVER THE VERY ISSUE OF GROENEVELT'S
PENCHAM FOR GIVING VOTING ADVICE (OF ANOTHER PERSUASION)
TO THE RANK-AND-FILE
BROWN

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